

Philosophy 1000-01: Introduction to Philosophy—Major Texts.

Instructor: John Russon, Mackinnon 338

Office Hours, M 12:30-2:00

TAs: Casey Ford, Kyle Bromhall, Karen Robertson

Course meets: Rozh 103, MW 10:30-11:20.

Tutorial (discussion) sections:

01: W 11:30-12:20, Mack 317 (Karen Robertson)

02: W 12:30-1:20, Mack 305 (Karen Robertson)

03: Th 10:30-11:20, Mack 228 (Kyle Bromhall)

04: Th 11:30-12:20, Rozh 105 (Casey Ford)

05: Th 12:30-1:20, Mack 317 (Kyle Bromhall)

06: Th 1:30-2:20, Mack 308 (Kyle Bromhall)

07: F 11:30-12:20, Mack 306 (Casey Ford)

08: F 12:30-1:20, Mack 232 (Casey Ford)

The philosophical inquiry into the ultimate nature of reality and into the meaning of life has always been alive in human culture, and we will look at a variety of the world's most insightful and influential philosophical texts, drawn from a number of different cultures and historical periods. Our overall question will be how to understand the nature of our existence, and the relationship between our experience and the nature of reality. Our study will begin somewhere around 500 BC, in the north of what is now India, with sayings of Siddhatta Gotama—"the Buddha"—who inaugurated what is usually thought to be the first vision of universal humanity. We will then turn to Ancient Greece in the 400s BC, the culture that invented "democracy," and we will draw on some of the greatest writers of our tradition—Thucydides, Plato, and Aristotle—to study the nature of political experience. Leaving the ancient world, we will next turn to the Prophet Mohammad (570-632 AD) for the idea that our lives have a uniquely spiritual fulfillment, and to the late medieval philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AD), for his arguments for the existence of God. Against Aquinas, Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677 AD) argues that reality is only a system of causes, properly studied by natural science, and we will consider how to understand our experience in the context of such a deterministic world. We will conclude our study with the work of Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), who argues for the urgency of violent action to resist the oppressive character of global capitalism, and Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), who develops an existentialist account of our need to make our lives meaningful by owning up to the responsibilities of our freedom. In addition to studying some of the most important philosophical writers of our tradition and deepening our understanding of the issues that define our lives, these texts will also introduce to some of the most important developments in human history.

Schedule of Readings:

Do the specified readings IN ADVANCE OF the class meeting for which they are indicated. Come to class prepared to talk about the readings.

Date:	Reading:
M Jan 10	Introduction
W Jan 12	The Buddha (<u>Reader</u> , pp 1-9. Emphasize sections 2-14.)
M Jan 17	The Buddha (<u>Reader</u> , pp 1-9. Emphasize sections 15-16.)
W Jan 19	The Buddha (cont'd)
M Jan 24	Aristotle: Politics I.1-2 (<u>Reader</u> , pp 11-12)
W Jan 26	Thucydides: Pericles' Funeral Oration (<u>History</u> , pp 143-151)
M Jan 31	Thucydides: Mytilenean Dialogue (<u>History</u> , pp [194]212-223)
W Feb 2	Thucydides: Melian Dialogue (<u>History</u> , pp 400-408)
M Feb 7	Plato: Apology of Socrates (<u>Four Texts</u> , pp 63-97)
W Feb 9	Plato: Apology of Socrates (cont'd)
M Feb 14	Mohammad (<u>Reader</u> , pp 13-23)
W Feb 16	Mohammad (cont'd)
M Feb 21	NO CLASS—Reading week
W Feb 23	NO CLASS—Reading week
M Feb 28	Aquinas <u>ST</u> , I, Q 2 a. 3 (pp 24-27)
W Mar 2	Aquinas <u>ST</u> , I, Q 75 a.1, Q 76 a. 1 (pp 281-283, 291-297)
M Mar 7	Aquinas (cont'd)
W Mar 9	Spinoza <u>Ethics</u> , Pt. I, Prop 33, Appendix, pp 54-56, 57-62
M Mar 14	Spinoza <u>Ethics</u> , Pt. III, Preface, Def'n/Ax, Props 1-3, (pp 102-107)
M Mar 16	Spinoza (cont'd)
M Mar 21	de Beauvoir <u>Ethics of Ambiguity</u> , Ch. 2, pp 35-42
W Mar 23	de Beauvoir <u>Ethics of Ambiguity</u> , Ch. 2, pp 42-62
M Mar 28	de Beauvoir <u>Ethics of Ambiguity</u> , Ch. 3, Sections 1-2, pp 74-96
W Mar 30	de Beauvoir (cont'd)
M Apr 4	Fanon <u>Wretched of the Earth</u> (<u>Reader</u> , pp 25-35)
W Apr 6	Fanon (cont'd)

Final Examination: M Apr 25, 2:30-4:30 pm

Course Texts:

Phil 1000-01 Course reader.

Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, Penguin.

West and West, Four Texts on Socrates, Cornell.

Pegis, Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas, Random House.

Spinoza, Ethics and Selected Letters, Hackett.

de Beauvoir, The Ethics of Ambiguity, Citadel.

Assignments:

In-class reaction quizzes, Jan 19, Jan 26, Feb 2, Feb 9. 4 @ 10% = 40%

These will be short quizzes written in class, in response to the week's reading assignment.

Comparative, Critical Essay on Aquinas and Spinoza. Due Monday March 28. 30%

This will be a critical essay, approximately 6 pages in length, in which you compare the positions of Aquinas and Spinoza and offer your own assessment of which is right. The essay will follow a precise format, which will be explained in class and in a handout.

Final Examination. April 25. 30%

This will be a comprehensive examination (i.e., it will cover all the material studied in class. It will include short answer and essay questions. One essay question will focus on Simone de Beauvoir and Frantz Fanon.

SEVEN STANDARD STATEMENTS – WINTER '11

E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> email account regularly: email is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement...

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester **Winter '11** courses, without academic penalty, is **Friday March 11th**. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

Resources

The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>